TAMIL

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Paper 9689/02
Reading and Writing

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Key messages

- In order to do well in this paper, candidates should demonstrate understanding of the passage given and answer the questions using their own vocabulary as far as possible.
- In Questions 3 and 4 candidates should be aware of the direct relationship between the number of points they need to make and the number of marks available e.g. 4 points for a 4 mark question, 3 points for a 3 mark question, etc.

General comments

In the comprehension questions candidates should make sure they understand the full demands of the question before attempting to answer. Some candidates copied out long portions of the text, which was not always selective enough to demonstrate adequate comprehension. However, there were many who did their best to use their own language and were rewarded for successfully doing so.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Some candidates found this exercise challenging but there were many who found most of the synonyms in the passage effortlessly.

There were a few candidates who didn't follow the instructions for Question 1 and used the given words in sentences (which is the task for **Question 2**) instead of giving the synonyms. Candidates may benefit from specific training on how to find synonyms in a passage.

Question 2

Many candidates successfully completed this exercise and used the given words in sentences. However, a number of candidates made grammatical mistakes in their sentences.

Question 3 & 4

Response to **Questions 3** & **4** has been attempted by all the candidates and many successfully gained all the marks available for the different questions. However, some missed a number of points and lost those marks. Many candidates copied out of the relevant part of the text, and thus lost language marks. Candidates should use their own words as far as possible.

Question 5a and 5b

Overall the performance of the candidates on this question was good. However, it seems that a number of candidates misunderstood what is required in question **5b**

Question 5b requires candidates to give personal examples or opinions, not to copy / draw further information form the texts.

Many candidates have understood the question and have given their personal experience and/or the experience of their family or friend. However, some wrote something in general, just lifting sentences from the text.

Even for **Question 5a**, requiring candidates to summarise important points from two passages, some candidates wrote generalities on the subject.

Teachers should point out to candidates that for **Question 5a** they need to summarise information GIVEN in the two texts and not make up an answer consisting of generalities that cannot be credited.

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| Paper 9689/03 |
| Essay |

Key messages

In order to perform well on this paper, candidates should:

- select a title which they understand and focus on the terms in the question
- write a clear, concise and logical argument with appropriate exemplification
- use accurate and idiomatic Tamil with a range of grammatical structures and appropriate vocabulary
- plan their essay and ensure that the opening paragraph sets out the terms of argument
- write a conclusion based on the prior arguments

General comments

This is an Essay paper in which candidates are required to compose one essay from a choice of five topics. The essay is marked out of 40, with 16 marks available for Content and 24 marks available for Quality of Language.

Overall, performance on this paper was good and there were no infringements of the rubric.

Weaker responses were characterised by a combination of misunderstanding of the question (leading to loss of marks for Content) and poor language skills.

The most common spelling errors occurred in the use of the following letters, which were often written in an incorrect form:

1. ல – ழ – ள 2. ந – ன – ண 3. ர – ற த் – ட்

Candidates would benefit from more practice in using these letters. Candidates should also be reminded that the letter ஏ when conjugated with consonants will become கே, சே, தே etc.

Some candidates wrote அங்கை, இங்கை, எங்கை rather than அங்கே, இங்கே, எங்கே.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

A good proportion of candidates tried this question and did fairly well.

Question 2

Too few candidates opted for this question to make comment possible

Question 3

This was the second most popular question. The best answers contained well-structured complex sentences and few spelling and grammatical errors.

Question 4

There were a number of strong responses to this question. Candidates made interesting points and substantiated their argument with relevant examples.

Question 5

This was the most popular question. Strong candidates' responses were characterised by logical argument, good introduction and conclusion and sophisticated language use. Poor spelling and lack of focused content was seen in weaker candidates' responses.

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> **Paper 9689/04**
> **Texts**

Key messages

In order to do well in this paper, candidates should:

- Check carefully that they manage their time well and answer three questions;
- Check carefully that they do not answer two questions on the same text;
- Think carefully about what the question is asking of them before they start to write;
- Refer to the question during the answer, not just at the start and the finish.
- Practise responses to the passage-based exercises, where the passage is a stimulus and should be used as a starting point for their answer.

General comments

Overall the candidates performed very well.

Most candidates respected the rubric and only a few have answered two questions on the same book.

Some candidates made a mistake and answered from a different verse than what the question asked. Candidates should be trained to read the question carefully before attempting and answer and, if helpful, even copy the question in their answer booklet to help them understand it better.

Question 1

Too few candidates chose this question to make comment possible.

Question 2

This was the most popular question and many candidates gave very good answers, even though there were some who answered on the wrong chapter.

Candidates are advised to cover all the ten couplets in their answer, not just some of them.

Some candidates struggled with the meaning of the words they were asked to explain. Candidates need to study the text in depth rather than memorising the passages.

Question 3

There were some very good answers to this question, giving response to the specific question and showing proof of an in-depth study and understanding of the text.

However, a number of candidates, instead of answering the specific question about Lord Shiva's appearance or Appar's difficulties or the literary merits of the hymns, merely summarised the gist of the decad.

Question 4

This was a popular question which was answered satisfactorily by many. A number of the good answers were characterised by pertinent use of quotations.

Question 5

Many candidates have chosen this question. Since the novel is a lengthy one candidates are advised to tailor their answer precisely to the question so it does not become over-long. Candidates who merely summarise the story are unlikely to get into the higher mark bands.

Question 6

Many candidates have answered this question well.

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General comments

In this paper candidates are required to translate a short passage from English to Tamil.

Performance on this paper was generally good and there were no infringements of the rubric.

The majority of the candidates did well, while the weaker candidates lost marks through spelling errors, incorrect sentence construction and misinterpreted words.

Stronger candidates were able to break up some of the longer sentences into two separate sentences and produce largely correct and meaningful translation.

The phrases / sentences that seemed to be problematic for some candidates include:

- at the station

- … that my train was delayed.

- … which was lying in the middle of the table.

- What a shock!

- I felt very ashamed of myself.